**NORTHCENTRAL UNIVERSITY**

**ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEET**

# Learner: Thomas E. Lambright, Jr. Assignment # 4

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| ELT7008-4 | Dr. Kat Assignment # 1 |

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| Hello Dr.Gatin,  This particular assignment gave me the opportunity to write a reflective essay which supports my reasoning about the identification of some online collaborative issues that can arise between instructor and learner and how to motivate learners.   **Faculty Use Only**  <Faculty comments here>  <Faculty Name> <Grade Earned> <Writing Score> <Date Graded>  Online Collaborative Issues  Thomas E. Lambright, Jr.  Northcentral University  In this reflective essay I will establish a line of reasoning which will support my PowerPoint presentation. This particular assignment focuses on the challenges of online instructions of learners. Due to the environment of online learning, such as the lack of face-to-face contact, a few strategies for helping learners overcome obstacles to their learning process were provided (Pozzi and Persico, 2011).  One challenge to online learning that was mentioned in the PowerPoint was a need for learners to feel a sense of community although they are not actually meeting in person. One strategy that instructor can use to motivate and unite online learners is to establish cooperative learning roles (Conrad and Donaldson, 2004). Learning roles provides an opportunity for each individual to take on a task of leadership for the success of the group. For example, one role is the team leader who makes sure that the team meets, discusses and executes a game plan of assignment completion as a team. To be more specific, students will review the expectations of the facilitator and the rules which will govern the online course. There will be student team building; each individual will be given responsibilities such as team record keeper, team leader, team encourager, and team time keeper. These roles will be voted on by the members. Each person that wishes to hold this position will have an opportunity to present a description about themselves and their level of experience for this position. The reason for this strategy is based on student collaboration (Palloff and Pratt, 2005). In order for the students to meet with success, a system of unifying team building is essential. My experience in the design of an online learning system encourages students to team build and work together to complete a project. This webquest project required that students in each team take an active role in completing the assignment. Students also received an individual grade for their efforts as well with regards to this project. The reason for my selecting the team building approach is that it provides an opportunity for learners to not feel isolated but part of a contributing whole. This aspect is important in motivating learners to make progress (Smith and Throne, 2009).  Another key strategy is the application of a discussion thread (Palloff, Pratt, 2007).Part of the verbal and signed agreement of the team will be to hold others accountable for the responsibility of helping each other, contributing to the group, completing the tasks agreed upon, establishing deadlines for dates and times of events, finally communicate consistently and professionally. The basic procedures will be to: (a) post responses to tasks given on the discussion board, (b) respond to each other as members about the posts, and (c) provide feedback from discussions and posts. The reason for this strategy is to develop a dialogue of academic exchange between learners. The result of this strategy is that the learning is student centered as opposed to the traditional teacher centered learning. My own experience of teacher centered learning verse student centered learning is interesting. I have discovered through experience that student centered work is more engaging for the students. In the traditional teacher centered learning, I found myself constantly being the all knowledge guru. This to me was very tiring, and I found student interest in topics decrease. On the other hand, when students became the leaders of their learning a greater sense of commitment was made on the part of the students. The reason that I decided to continue with the student centered learning format is to ensure that students would be able to not only learn the topic but teach others, apply the concepts and grow as individuals.  Another key part of motivating students online is for the instructor to have a presence. What I mean by this is for the instructor to be the leaders as a facilitator of knowledge. The reason for this strategy is that the learners want to have their independents to the learning process put also feel that their learning is going in the correct direction. The instructor can show presence by both posting thought provoking questions but also providing feedback of various posts from the students. The professor can simply provide a positive comment and next ask a question about the students reasoning. This process establishes that the professor is taking note of the work but also that the instructor wants the student to succeed by challenging the student with questions (Bender, 2003). My own experience with teacher presence recognizes the importance of this strategy. Teacher presence can be the form of writing a positive comment on the report of a student. In addition to writing a positive report to a student, it is also important to post a question about the work. The use of a question may help the learner realize another aspect or view of the assignment. The reason for the selection of this strategy is that, feedback is also important. The effective part about this feedback strategy is that it can be interactive. What I mean by this is that the feedback can be both between teacher and student, the traditional way as well as interaction between student and student. This strategy can also be applied with student to student interaction due to the fact that it adds additional communication as well as increasing the thought process. Students will be able to comment on each other’s work which can have a positive effect for motivating additional learning (Watkins, 2005).      References  Bender, T. (2003). *Discussion-based online teaching to enhance student learning: Theory, practice*  *and assessment.* Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing.  Conrad, R., & Donaldson, J. (2004). *Engaging the online learner: Activities and resources for*  *creative instruction.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.  Palloff, R., & Pratt, K. (2005). *Collaborating online: Learning together in community.*  San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.  Palloff, R., & Pratt, K. 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